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CHATTERIS URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the



Year ended 31st December, 1952.



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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the year ending 31st December, 1952.

To the Chairman and Members of
CHATTERIS URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

I have pleasure in submitting to you my Annual Report upon the vital statistics and sanitary work of your District for the year ending 31st December, 1952.

VITAL STATISTICS.

POPULATION There was an increase of 28 in the estimated total population from 5500 in 1951 to 5528 in 1952.

BIRTH RATE The birth rate per thousand of the population showed a slight decrease, being 10.0 in 1951 and 9.58 in 1952.

There were no Still-births during 1952.

GENERAL DEATH RATE. The death rate for 1952 was 6.87 per thousand of the population compared with 8.18 in 1951. The total number of deaths in the Urban District in 1952 was 38, in 1951, 45. This rate of 6.87 per thousand of the population is the lowest recorded since 1937. For comparison I have set out below Death rates as previously reported.

1937.	12.35	per thousand	of population	
1938.	9.94	"	"	"
1939.	11.10	"	"	"
1945.	13.99	"	"	"
1946.	13.17	"	"	"
1947.	14.41	"	"	"
1948.	11.89	"	"	"
1950.	9.45	"	"	"
1951.	8.18	"	"	"

NATURAL INCREASE OF THE POPULATION. The numbers of births in excess of deaths in 1952 was 15; in 1951 it was 10.

INFANT MORTALITY. The death rate of infants under one year of age per thousand live births was 37.72 compared with 18.20 in 1951. The total number of deaths was 2 in 1952; 1 in 1951.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES. There were no deaths from infectious diseases or of children under two years of age from diarrhoea.

Throughout the period under review there were practically no epidemic forms of disease. All cases were essentially sporadic. Such a condition points to general efficiency of the sanitary provision of the town.

HEALTH SERVICES & PREVENTIVE MEDICINE IN THE AREA

Staff.

One part time Medical Officer.
One whole time Sanitary Inspector.

A District Midwife is appointed and a Maternal and Child Welfare Clinic is held weekly. An anti-natal clinic is organised by local medical practitioners. The arrangements generally for the care of expectant and nursing mothers and young children are adequate. The health visiting service is working satisfactorily.

ILLNESS - CARE AND AFTER CARE. Vaccination and diphtheria immunisation services are available. The ambulance service is very good and the domestic help service satisfactory. Pathological investigations are carried out under arrangement with the King Edward VIII Memorial Institute, Lewisham. Hospital treatment is available at Doddington Hospital, Addenbrooke's Hospital and Peterborough Memorial Hospital.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply. Wisbech & District Water Board are the Statutory Authority and a piped main supply from Marham, Norfolk is provided to 1446 houses directly whilst 306 houses are only supplied by standpipes. The remaining houses in the outlying rural area have no piped supply. The houses which are only supplied by standpipe are mainly in poor structural condition and provide some guide as to the possible size of any slum clearance scheme which may be envisaged.

It is essential not only to continue to attract workers to the outlying fen area but also to provide a satisfactory standard of health and amenity that piped mains supply should be afforded to the outlying districts of the area as soon as possible.

During the summer a chronic water shortage was apparent in the higher parts of the town.

It is understood that the Water Board have a large scheme in being to remedy this deficiency of pressure and it is essential that this scheme is proceeded with. Some help will be afforded by the new Water Tower of 200,000 gallons capacity and this tower should soon be in operation. The quality of the water supplied is satisfactory.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal. The Acre Fen sewage disposal plant is now commissioned and is working satisfactorily. This plant serves 40 per. cent of the town area and a good quality effluent is being produced.

Crude sewage is still discharged untreated into open surface water drainage dykes from five principal outfalls.

The town area is adequately sewered but the outfalls to the sewers are situated in close proximity to housing estates (in one case less than 100 yards) and the public footpaths cross the dykes themselves. The dykes have little natural flow in summer and the consequent stagnant filthy conditions give rise to strong smells and could precipitate the spread of water borne diseases. The resultant danger

to the health of the inhabitants of Chatteris cannot be overstressed. Rat infestation of gardens to houses in the vicinity of the outfalls regularly occurs despite vigorous treatment. In the future, housing development will proceed beyond the present outfalls. Fouling of watercourses and main drainage river occurs, The high biochemical oxygen demand of the sewage results in the intolerable conditions for fish life in the Twenty Foot and Forty Foot Rivers.

Proposals. It is proposed to take the existing sewage from the outfalls by trunk sewers to a new sewage disposal works designed on modern lines in Nightlayer Fen and to pipe in the drainage dykes in Birch Fen which will still be used as storm overflows. The scheme is designed to allow the necessary housing development to proceed without danger to health.

In my opinion this scheme is most essential and urgent in the public health interest and should proceed immediately to

- a) remove the serious pollution now taking place in the local rivers in which the young people of Chatteris bathe.
- b) obviate the grave risk of epidemic water borne disease.
- c) allow housing development to proceed on balanced and rational lines.
- d) remedy the nuisance of the drainage dykes which run alongside public footpaths (I myself in my youth have slipped in twice)
- e) eradicate the danger to the public health and amenities of Chatteris.

This scheme is now under Ministry consideration and an early starting date should be awarded.

Public Cleansing. House refuse is cleared by contract weekly. There is room for improvement in the methods of collection and the equipment available. Street scavenging is carried out satisfactorily. A critical labour shortage hampers the improvements of these services but steps to improve the service should be taken as opportunity is afforded.

The labour shortage hampers work at the Refuse Dump but the situation here is generally becoming more satisfactory.

Rivers and Streams. There are no natural rivers or streams within the Urban area. The town is situated on a layer of Kimmeridge clay thrown up and forming high land above the fen. The rainfall in the area has always gravitated on the east and west sides into the low lying fens. This outfall is intercepted by the artificial cuts and "rivers" made some 300 years ago when the fens were reclaimed.

Closet Accommodation. This is entirely on the water carriage system in the urban area.

Schools. The schools are all supplied with piped water and the general sanitary conditions satisfactory.

Food. There is no central slaughterhouse within the urban area. Supplies of meat are delivered weekly from Ely. The only animals inspected were killed in emergency. Appended is the record of inspection of carcases.

All the premises of the food retailers were inspected and found satisfactory. Where minor defects were found they were quickly remedied.

There were no food poisoning outbreaks during the period under review.

Inspection of ice cream producers and retailers are made regularly and satisfactory condition of sales prevail. Some 98% of the ice cream and frozen fruit juices is produced outside the district and retailed wrapped or cartoned under hygienic conditions.

Attached is a copy of the state of Factories and Workshops in the area.

Remedy of defects during the year without service of Formal Notices.

Number of minor defects in dwelling houses remedied in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers..... 127.

Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied..... 3.

Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices By. owners..... 3.

Rats and Mice Infestation. The sewers of the town are reasonably free from rat infestation and have been twice satisfactorily treated in accordance with recommended Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries proceedings.

Difficulty is experienced in controlling rat infestation at the outfall dykes.

Some cases of infestation of premises have been remedied during the year.

A part-time trained operator is available for this work.

During the year the Council's refuse dump at Campole Drove was found to be heavily infested with rats but after treatment the Dump was practically cleared. Regular baiting and poisoning is now carried out.

Housing. Figures showing the progress made during the year are appended. Steps have been taken to acquire more land to ensure continuity in the housing campaign.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Members,

Your obedient Servant,

H. S. Batten

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY AND SOCIAL CONDITIONSParticulars of District.

Area (in acres)	13719
Estimated population mid 1952	5528
Rateable Value	£ 19265
Product of 1d rate	£ 74
Number of inhabited houses	1752.

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

	Males	Females	Total.
Live births (legitimate)	40	13	53
Live births (illegitimate)	-	-	-
Still births	-	-	-
Deaths	21	17	38
Birth rate per 1000 population			9.58
Death rate per 1000 est. population			6.87

Death rate of infants under 1 year

All infants per 1000 live births	37.72.
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Deaths

The chief causes of deaths were;

Carcinoma of Colon	1	1	2
" " Rectum	1	1	2
" " Tongue	-	1	1
" " Stomach	1	-	1
" " Lung	1	-	1
" " Lead of Pancreas	-	1	1
Cerebral Haemorrhage	3	2	5
Coronary Thrombosis	5	1	6
Atelectasis	2	1	2
Acute Bronchitis	1	-	1
Acute Bronchial Pneumonia	2	-	2
Disseminated Sclerosis	1	-	1
Myocarditis	2	8	10
Subarachnoid Haemorrhage	-	2	2
Uraemia	1	-	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	21	17	38

Infant Mortality

Atelectasis	1. day
Acute Bronchial Pneumonia	8. months.

Infectious Diseases.

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Measles.....	4	3
Chicken Pox.....	3	4
Infective Hepatitis.	3	2
Whooping Cough.....	-	2
Pneumonia.....	1	-
Scarlet Fever.....	9	11
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	20	22

Carcases Inspected and Condemned

	Cattle excluding cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed (if known)	-	-	-	-	-
Number inspected	7	-	-	1	26
<u>All diseases.</u> <u>except</u> <u>Tuberculosis</u>					
Whole carcases condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	1	4
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	-	-	-	100%	15.4%
Tuberculosis only. Whole carcases condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	-	-	-	-	-

Housing Position at 31st December 1952.

	Post-War Housing		
	Council	Private Enterprise	Housing Association
Total number let in Contracts	222	84	Nil
Total number completed and occupied	182	79	12.
Total completed during 1952 (included in total number completed above)	32	4	3
Under construction	40	3	Nil

FACTORIES ACT 1937 and 1948

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health in respect of the year 1952 for the Urban District of Chatteris in the County of Cambridgeshire.

1. Inspection for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by the Sanitary Inspector.)

Part 1 of the *act*.

Premises	M/c line 1.	Number on Register. 3.	Number of			M/c line 7.
			Inspections 4.	Written Notices. 5.	Occupiers Prosecuted 6.	
Factories in which which Sec 1, 2, 3, 4, & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority	1	5	30	-	-	
Factories not included in 1 (in which Sec 7 is enforced by Local Authority	2.	22	86	-	-	
Other premises in which Sec 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers premises)	3	2	10	-	-	
Total		29	126	-	-	

FACTORIES ACT 1937 and 1948 (continued)

2. Cases in which defects were found.

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found					Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.
	M/c Line 2.	Found	Remedied	Ref. red to H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Want of cleanliness		—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature		—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences		—	—	—	—	—
Insufficient		2	2	—	2	—
Unsuitable or defective		1	1	—	—	—
Total		3	3	—	2	Nil

